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# BLACK MAGIC

10¢

TRUE AMAZING  
MYSTERIES

SEPT.-OCT. 1957  
No. 34

*magazine*





## The image features a dense background collage of vintage comic book covers. Titles visible include "Supermouse", "JETTA", "MYSTERY COMICS", "FANTASTIC TALES", "COSMO CAT", "STARTLING COMICS", "STRANGE MYSTERIES", "DARING ADVENTURES", "FAMOUS FUNNIES", "HILARIOUS RAUCOUS", "TEEN-AGE SWEETHEART OF THE 21st CENTURY", "DUCK", "EERIE", "EXCITING COMICS", "CASPER CAT", "BARNYARD COMICS", and "STRANGE WORLDS". The covers depict various genres including superhero action, mystery, science fiction, and humor. Overlaid centrally is a large, dark purple speech bubble with a thick black outline. Inside the bubble, the text "WEB COMIC UNIVERSE.COM" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a slight drop shadow effect.



THROUGH THE SWIRL OF GUN SMOKE AND THE HAZE OF BATTLE, THE MEN SAW DAN HAYES -- HEARD HIS VOICE -- BUT THEY DID NOT BELIEVE IT, FOR HAYES WAS DEAD -- THEY HAD SEEN HIM FALL MONTHS BEFORE, BUT SUDDENLY THERE WAS PROOF AND THE MEN KNEW THEY HAD SEEN ...

# The IMMORTAL SERGEANT



I'VE HAD ENOUGH!  
HE'S NO MAN--HE'S  
A SLAVE-DRIVER,  
MARCHIN' US LIKE  
THIS, THREE HOURS  
WITHOUT REST!  
I'M GONNA FILL  
MY CANTEEN!

DON'T BE A FOOL,  
DAVIS! YOU KNOW  
HOW HE IS ABOUT  
BREAKIN' RANKS  
WITHOUT  
ORDERS!



I'LL HAVE WATER,  
I TELL YOU...



WHO GAVE YOU PERMISSION  
TO FALL OUT?

NOBODY!  
I WAS THIRSTY, AND  
I'M A HUMAN BEING  
... I AIN'T A  
MACHINE LIKE YOU!

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MACHINE, AM I?  
WHY, I OUGHTA--

NO, SARGE--  
DON'T--

YOU THINK I'D WASTE TIME  
KILLING YOU, DAVIS? YOU  
VOLUNTEERED TO FIGHT  
FOR THE UNION. IF ANYONE  
KILLS YOU--IT'LL BE THE  
REBS--NOT ME! NOW  
GIT BACK INTO RANK.

NOW, LISTEN CLOSE--ALL OF YOU!  
WE AIN'T STOPPIN' FOR ANYTHING.  
COLONEL BISHOP NEEDS US IN MILLS  
FALLS--AND THAT'S WHERE WE'RE  
GOING! YOU DON'T NEED WATER,  
FOOD OR REST. YOU'RE SOLDIERS!  
GIT MOVIN'!



I SWEAR--NOTHING'LL STOP  
THAT MAN. AIN'T A REBEL  
BULLET--EVEN DEATH ITSELF  
COULD KEEP HIM FROM  
SOLDIERIN'!

MEBBE, DAVIS--  
BUT YOU GOTTA  
ADMIT, HE'S THE  
BEST NON-COM IN  
THE WHOLE DANGED  
REGIMENT--MEBBE  
IN THE DIVISION.

YEAH, WILLIAMS. MUCH  
AS I HATE HIM--YOU'RE  
RIGHT. HE NEVER LET  
US DOWN ONCE. GOT  
US OUT OF LOTS OF  
TIGHT SCRAPES.  
TOO.

SERGEANT HAYES AND  
THAT KNIFE, HE SAYS IT'S  
A SCALPIN' KNIFE GIVEN TO  
HIM BY A SIOUX CHIEF. SAYS  
AS LONG AS IT'S WITH HIM,  
HIS SPIRIT CAN'T NEVER  
LEAVE HIS BODY...



AH, THAT'S ALL HOGWASH. I  
DON'T BELIEVE IT. HAYES AIN'T  
ANY DIFFERENT FROM ANOTHER  
MAN. A MINNIE BALL HITS  
HIM SQUARE AND HE'S DEAD  
AS A MACKEREL, SAME AS  
THE REST OF US. KNIFE OR  
NO KNIFE! HIS OLD  
SPIRIT'LL TAKE RIGHT  
OFF.

DON'T SCOFF,  
DAVIS. THAT  
KNIFE HAS A  
HEX ON IT. I  
LIVED OUT WITH  
THE INJUNS. I KNOW.  
I BELIEVE HIM.



SUDDENLY...

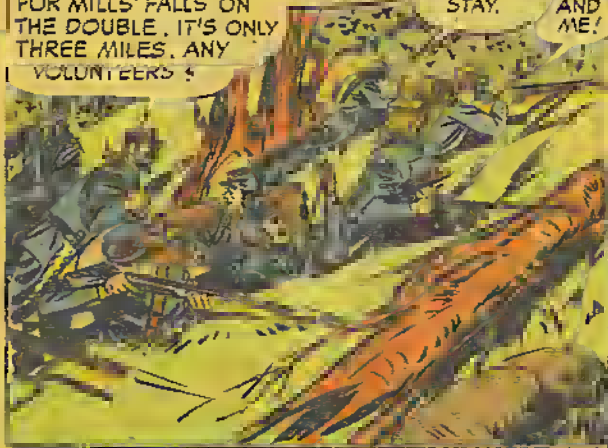
AMBUSH!

BUSHWHACKERS!  
TAKE COVER!





LISTEN, LADS! WE CAN'T DELAY HERE, YOU MEN ARE NEEDED BY THE COLONEL, I WANT TWO VOLUNTEERS TO HELP ME STAVE OFF THESE BUSHWHACKERS, WHILE THE REST OF YOU HEAD FOR MILLS' FALLS ON THE DOUBLE, IT'S ONLY THREE MILES, ANY VOLUNTEERS?



ME! I OUGHTA HAVE MY HEAD EXAMINED BUT I'LL STAY, AND ME!

ALL RIGHT, YOU BOYS -- GIT! TELL THE COLONEL WE'LL JOIN HIM SOON AS WE CAN!



AN HOUR LATER, AFTER REPULSING THE CONFEDERATES...

NO MORE CARTRIDGES! WE NEITHER!

I'VE GOT BULLETS LEFT--YOU TWO, SKEDADDLE!



WE CAN'T LEAVE YOU ALONE, SARGE!

I'LL BE ALL RIGHT... DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME... THE REB BULLET THAT CAN KILL ME AIN'T BEEN MOLDED YET.



THE SHARP CRACK OF A SNIPER'S RIFLE RAISED A SMALL ECHO...

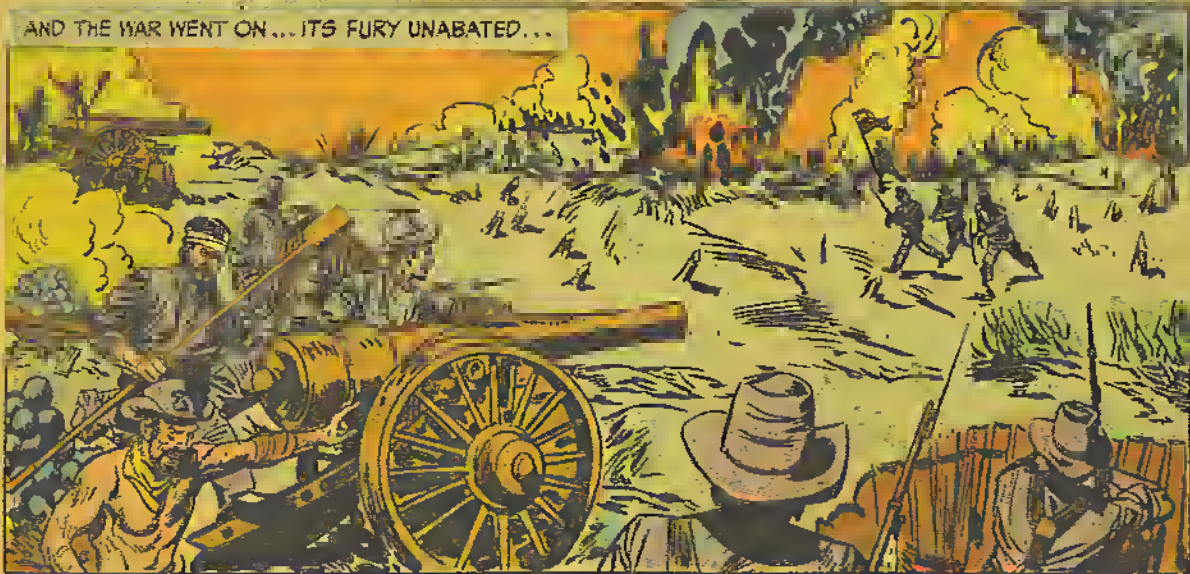


THE SARGE... HE'S DEAD! WE CAN'T DO ANY GOOD HERE.

YEAH--LET'S GO WHILE WE STILL HAVE A CHANCE...



AND THE WAR WENT ON... ITS FURY UNABATED...



NAMES LIKE ANTIETAM AND FREDERICKSBURG AND CHANCELLORSVILLE BECAME HOUSEHOLD WORDS... A YEAR PASSED... JULY 1863... A FEDERAL COLUMN APPROACHED A SMALL, SLEEPY PENNSYLVANIA VILLAGE ... BEFORE DAWN ...



HEY, DAVIS... WHAT DID YOU SAY THE NAME OF THAT LITTLE TOWN WAS?

OH... LET'S SEE... OH, YEAH--GETTYSBURGH.

WELL, CORPORAL DAVIS--YOU'D BETTER GET THE MEN DUG IN ON THE OUTSKIRTS... OF THIS GETTYSBURGH... OL' JOHNNY REBS LIABLE TO HIT US ANY TIME NOW.

RIGHT, SARGE.



FUNNY, I WAS THINKING OF HIM ALL NIGHT.

HIM? OH--YOU MEAN SERGEANT HAYES, YEAH. SO WAS I. A COUPLE OF TIMES, I GOT THE FEELING HE WAS THERE, MARCHING RIGHT BESIDE ME AT THE HEAD OF THE PLATOON.

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, I--**WILLIAMS! LOOK!** OUT THERE!

WE'RE IN FOR IT, NOW!



I AIN'T EVER SEEN SO MANY REBS AT ONE TIME.

WE'VE GOT TO HOLD 'EM UP UNTIL THE REST OF THE REGIMENT GETS HERE.







FIRE!



THEY'RE GETTIN' ON  
OUR FLANK!

WE'VE GOT TO PULL OUT  
OF HERE!



DOWN! THE DRAW--MEBBE WE  
GOT A CHANCE THERE!



NOT THERE, SARGE, IT'S NO  
GOOD. COME WITH ME.



WHO ARE YOU?

NEVER MIND, GET  
THE PLATOON TO  
FOLLOW YOU.  
TRUST ME, I  
WON'T LET  
YOU DOWN!



SERGEANT WILLIAMS,  
HOLD YOUR FIRE...  
THEY WON'T BE  
BACK!

HOLD YOUR FIRE, LADS!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

THE POSITION SECURED, THE SOLDIERS MAKE FIRES AND BOIL UP COFFEE...

THIS IS A GOOD SPOT. WE WAIT HERE FOR THE REGIMENT AND POOR OLD JOHNNY REB CAN'T DO A THING ABOUT IT--WE GOT HIM DEAD TO RIGHTS...

'TWARNT MY DOIN', DAVIS. THAT ONE OFF THERE FOUND THE PLACE, WHO IN TARNATION IS HE? AIN'T HAD A GOOD LOOK AT HIM!



HEY, SOLDIER--COME ON AND JOIN US. THE COFFEE'S HOT.

SORRY--I CAN'T, CORPORAL DAVIS.



DAVIS! THAT VOICE--

YEAH--



HE WAS STANDING HERE A MINUTE AGO. WILLIAMS I'D HAVE SWORN--

SERGEANT HAYES!



AH, BUT WE KNOW BETTER. HAYES IS DEAD. WE SAW HIM. THE DEAD DON'T COME BACK!

WAIT!



HIS KNIFE...

HE SAID AS LONG AS HE CARRIED THE KNIFE, HIS SPIRIT WOULDN'T LEAVE HIS BODY...



HE'S RESTING, NOW-- THE GOOD OL' SOLDIER WHO COULDN'T LEAVE HIS PLATOON...

HE CAME BACK WHEN WE NEEDED HIM MOST--

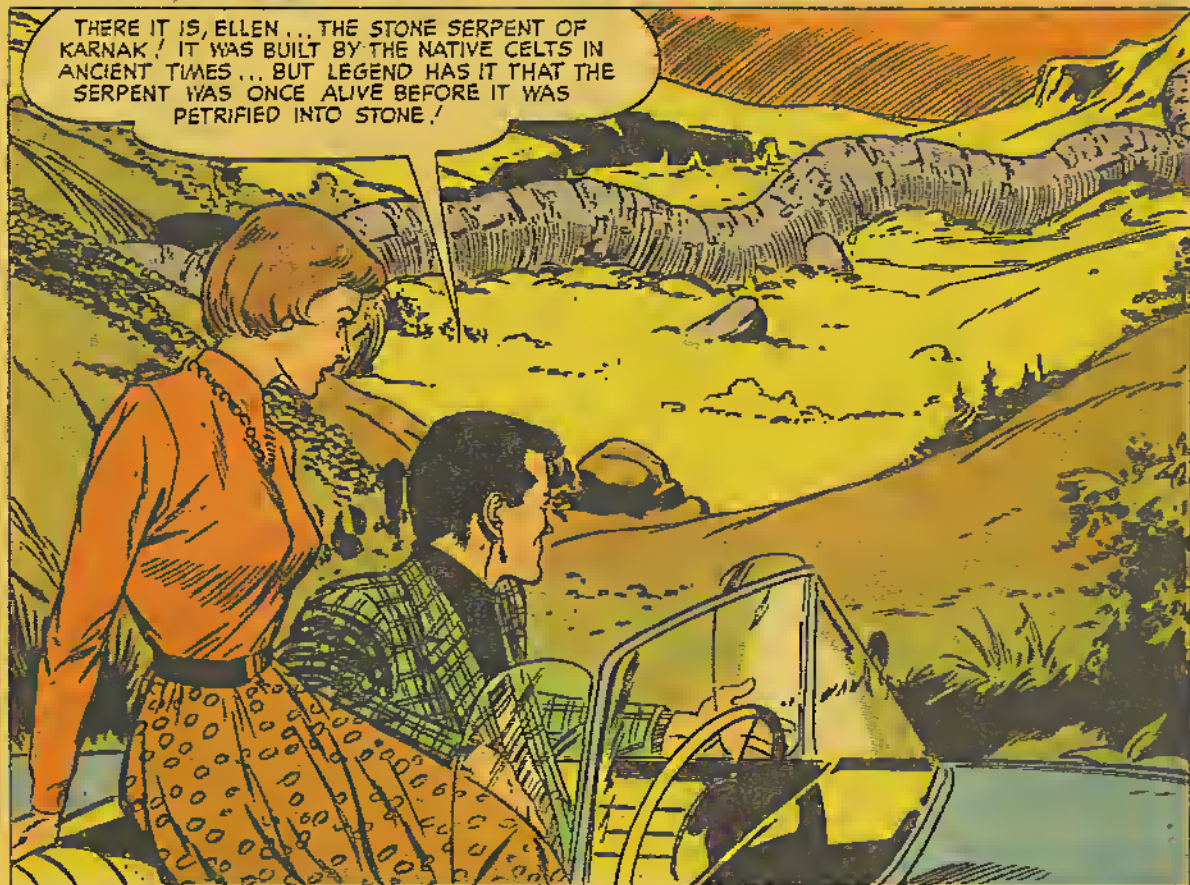


THE END



ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN FRANCE IS THE HUGE STONE SERPENT OF KARNAK, WINDING EERILY ACROSS MILES OF COUNTRYSIDE. COUNTLESS THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS HAVE SEEN IT, BUT FEW HAVE RETURNED WITH AS STRANGE A STORY AS ROY AND ELLEN PARKS...

# The Legend of KARNAK



THERE IT IS, ELLEN... THE STONE SERPENT OF KARNAK! IT WAS BUILT BY THE NATIVE CELTS IN ANCIENT TIMES... BUT LEGEND HAS IT THAT THE SERPENT WAS ONCE ALIVE BEFORE IT WAS PETRIIFIED INTO STONE!

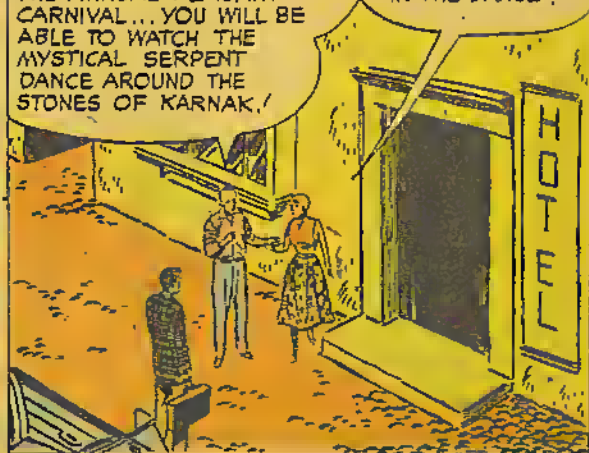
IT SOUNDS FASCINATING, ROY! I CAN'T WAIT TO EXPLORE THOSE OLD RUINS!

WELL, FIRST LET'S GET A ROOM AT THE LOCAL INN. I'VE HEARD THERE'S ONE RIGHT IN THE TOWN OF KARNAK.

AN HOUR LATER...

AH, YOU AMERICANS ARE FORTUNATE TO COME TO KARNAK AT THIS TIME. TOMORROW BRINGS THE ANNUAL PEASANT CARNIVAL... YOU WILL BE ABLE TO WATCH THE MYSTICAL SERPENT DANCE AROUND THE STONES OF KARNAK!

HOW EXCITING! BUT MUST WE ONLY WATCH... CAN'T WE JOIN IN THE DANCE?





NO! NONE BUT THE DESCENDANTS OF THE ORIGINAL CELTS ARE ALLOWED TO TAKE PART IN THE DANCE! STRANGERS ARE FORBIDDEN TO JOIN... BECAUSE THE SERPENT WOULD BE OFFENDED AND WOULD SEEK REVENGE!



LATER IN THE PRIVACY OF THEIR ROOM...

DID YOU SEE THAT HORRIFIED LOOK ON THE INNKEEPER'S FACE, ROY? HE ACTUALLY SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT A PILE OF DEAD STONES COULD SOMEHOW FEEL ANGRY AND WANT REVENGE!

WELL, WE SHOULDN'T LET A SILLY SUPERSTITION LIKE THAT STOP US! IF WE COULD JOIN IN THE DANCE, IT WOULD BE A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE TO TELL THE FOLKS BACK HOME ABOUT!



AND I THINK I KNOW HOW WE CAN DISGUISE OURSELVES LIKE THE NATIVES... SO THEY WON'T KNOW THAT WE'RE DANCING WITH THEM!



PERHAPS YOU CAN HELP US, MONSIEUR. WE SEEM TO HAVE LEFT SOME OF OUR BAGGAGE BEHIND IN THE LAST HOTEL WE STAYED AT. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR MY WIFE AND ME TO BORROW SOME CLOTHING UNTIL THE REST OF OUR BAGS ARRIVE?



SURELY. COME WITH ME...

I AM ABOUT YOUR SIZE... AND MY DAUGHTER'S CLOTHING WILL FIT YOUR WIFE. NO? OF COURSE IT'S ONLY CLOTHING SUCH AS WE POOR COUNTRY PEOPLE WEAR.

OH, THAT'S PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT!



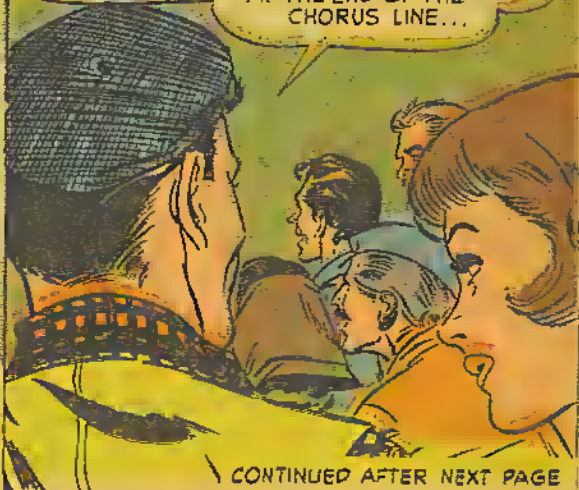
NEXT DAY...

THERE! NO ONE WILL RECOGNIZE US IN THE EXCITEMENT OF THE DANCE!



COME ON, RON... THE INNKEEPER'S ALREADY GONE TO THE DANCE! IT'LL BE A CINCH SNEAKING OUT OF HERE UNNOTICED!

LOOKS LIKE THE WHOLE VILLAGE IS OUT FOR THE DANCE. ALL WE'VE GOT TO DO IS TAG ALONG AT THE END OF THE CHORUS LINE...



CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE



ACCORDING TO WHAT I READ ABOUT THE SERPENT IT'S EIGHT MILES LONG... AND THE STONES ARE 17 FEET HIGH SO WE'LL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO GET LOST IN ITS COILS,

WELL, WE'LL JUST TRY TO KEEP THE OTHER DANCERS IN SIGHT.



AND SO AS THE SERPENT DANCE STARTS...



ON AND ON WINDS THE DANCE WHILE THE TWO AMERICANS AT THE END OF THE COLUMN HAVE THE TIME OF THEIR LIVES, BLISSFULLY UNAWARE OF WHAT IS TO COME...



THEN... OH, ROY... (GASP) I'M COMPLETELY... OUT OF BREATH! LET'S STOP... AND REST AWHILE...

GOOD IDEA... I'M KIND OF POOPED MYSELF!



BY THE TIME ROY AND ELLEN ARE READY TO REJOIN THE DANCE...

GOSH, THE DANCERS ARE ALL OUT OF SIGHT... I CAN'T EVEN HEAR THEM ANY MORE.

ROY... I... I JUST FELT THE STONES MOVE!



AND IT DOESN'T EVEN FEEL LIKE STONE ANY MORE! IT-IT'S SOFT AND SCALY LIKE A SNAKE'S SKIN!

YOU'RE RIGHT! IT'S EVEN CHANGING IN APPEARANCE-- ALMOST AS IF THE SERPENT HAS COME ALIVE!



EITHER WE'RE HAVING HALLUCINATIONS... OR THAT LEGEND THE INNKEEPER TOLD US ABOUT IS TRUE.

YOU MEAN ABOUT THE SERPENT BEING OFFENDED BY STRANGERS AND WANTING REVENGE. OH, ROY, LET... LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!







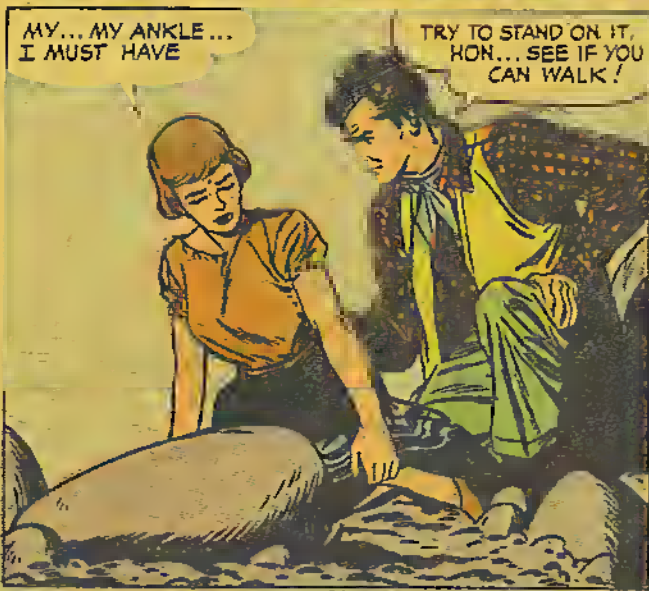
THE COILS ARE TIGHTENING AROUND US... TRYING TO CUT OFF OUR ESCAPE! COME ON, ELLEN... LET'S MAKE A RUN FOR IT!



BUT AS THEY MAKE THEIR BREAK FOR FREEDOM...

OHHH...!

ELLEN!



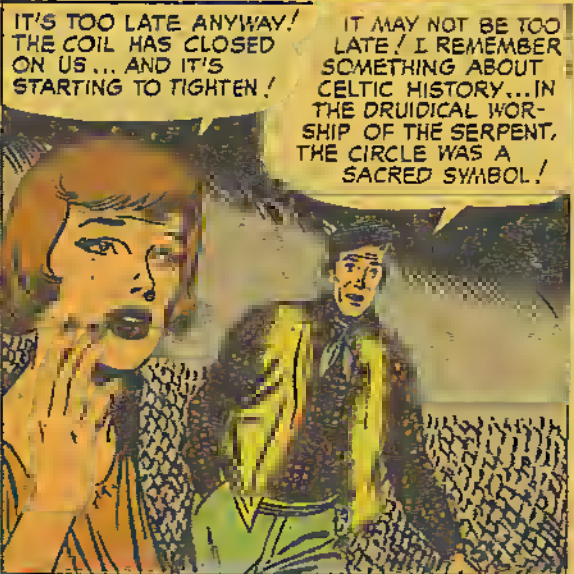
MY... MY ANKLE... I MUST HAVE

TRY TO STAND ON IT, HON... SEE IF YOU CAN WALK!



NO, I... I CAN'T KEEP MY WEIGHT ON IT... I CAN'T GO ANY FURTHER!

WELL, IT'S A CINCH I'M NOT GOING TO LEAVE YOU HERE ALONE... NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS!



IT'S TOO LATE ANYWAY! THE COIL HAS CLOSED ON US... AND IT'S STARTING TO TIGHTEN!

IT MAY NOT BE TOO LATE! I REMEMBER SOMETHING ABOUT CELTIC HISTORY... IN THE DRUIDICAL WORSHIP OF THE SERPENT, THE CIRCLE WAS A SACRED SYMBOL!



SO IF I DRAW A LARGE CIRCLE ON THE GROUND WITH MY PEN-KNIFE, IT OUGHT TO PROTECT US... AS LONG AS WE STAY INSIDE THE CIRCLE!

HURRY, ROY... THOSE COILS KEEP COMING CLOSER!



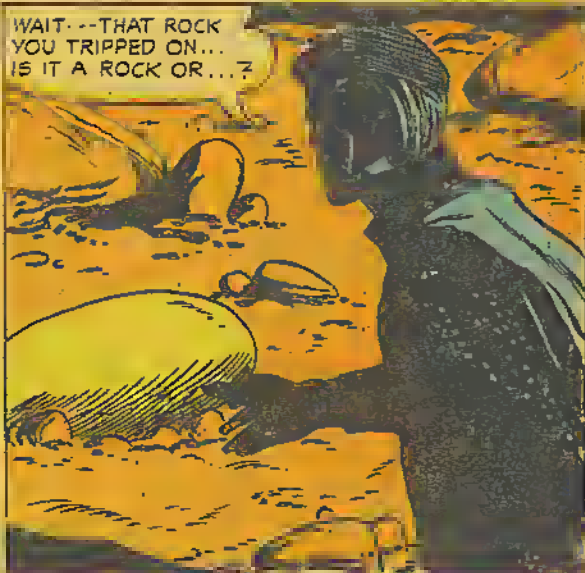
A MINUTE LATER...

YOU WERE RIGHT, ROY! THE COILS STOPPED JUST AT THE CIRCLE!

WELL, WE'RE SAFE FOR THE TIME BEING... BUT THERE'S STILL THE PROBLEM OF HOW TO MAKE THOSE COILS OPEN UP AND LET US GET OUT OF HERE!



WAIT... THAT ROCK YOU TRIPPED ON... IS IT A ROCK OR...?

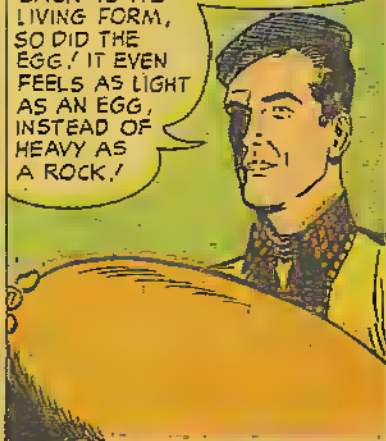


...AN EGG? IT MAY HAVE BEEN A ROCK WHEN YOU TRIPPED ON IT, BUT IT SURE LOOKS LIKE AN EGG NOW---A HUGE SERPENT'S EGG?

YOU MEAN YOU THINK IT'S THE KARNAK SERPENT'S EGG?



YES, IT ALL FITS IN! THE SERPENT WAS PETRIFIED ROCK UNTIL FIVE MINUTES AGO... AND SO WAS THIS EGG AND NOW THAT THE SERPENT REVERTED BACK TO ITS LIVING FORM, SO DID THE EGG! IT EVEN FEELS AS LIGHT AS AN EGG, INSTEAD OF HEAVY AS A ROCK!



AND I THINK THIS EGG IS GOING TO BE OUR MEANS OF ESCAPE YOU'LL HAVE TO STAND AND LEAN ON ME FOR SUPPORT, ELLEN... I WON'T BE ABLE TO HOLD YOU UP, BECAUSE I'M GOING TO HOLD THE EGG OVER MY HEAD AND GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF SLAMMING THE EGG AGAINST THE SERPENT'S SIDE!



UNLESS THE SERPENT MOVES ASIDE IN A HURRY THERE'LL BE JUST A SCRAMBLED EGG LEFT... AND I'M SURE THE SERPENT DOESN'T WANT THAT TO HAPPEN!

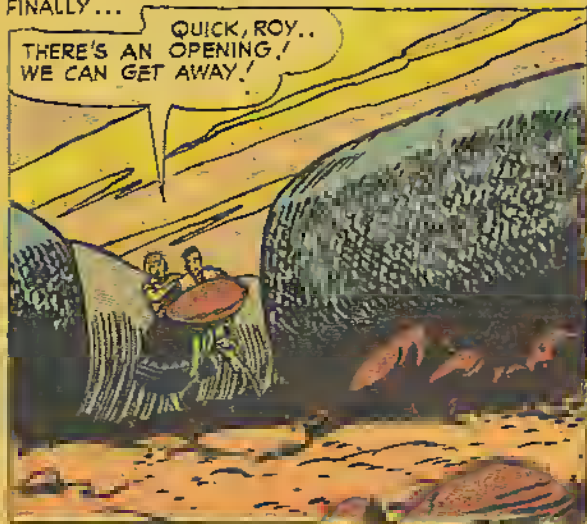


IT WORKED! THE COILS MOVED BACK!



AGAIN AND AGAIN ROY LUNGES WITH THE EGG, AND EACH TIME THE SERPENT COILS RETREAT UNTIL FINALLY...

QUICK, ROY...  
THERE'S AN OPENING!  
WE CAN GET AWAY!



WE MADE  
IT!



A SAFE DISTANCE AWAY...

WHEW.  
WE'LL  
NEVER  
VIOLATE  
A LOCAL  
CUSTOM  
LIKE  
THAT  
AGAIN!

YES, BUT AT LEAST  
THE EGG WILL  
ASTOUND THE  
SCIENTIFIC WORLD  
WHEN WE TELL  
WHAT HAPPENED!



BUT WITH EACH STEP FURTHER  
AWAY FROM THE SERPENT...

GOSH, THIS EGG IS GETTING  
HEAVIER AND HEAVIER! I...I  
CAN'T EVEN HOLD  
IT ANY  
MORE...!

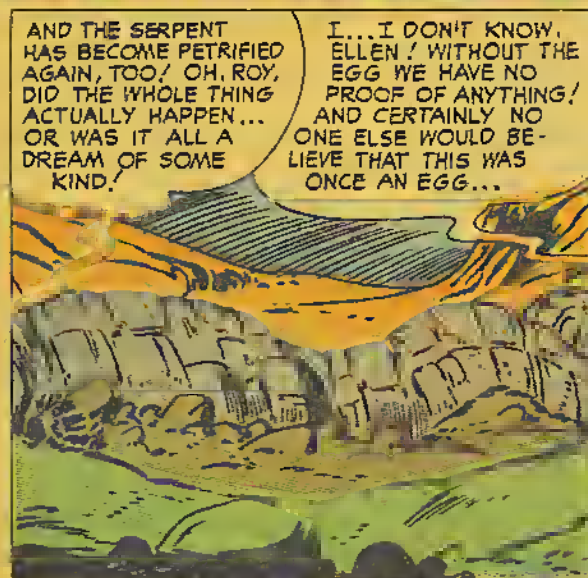


LOOK... IT'S TURNED TO STONE  
... JUST LIKE THE  
ROCK YOU TRIPPED  
OVER!



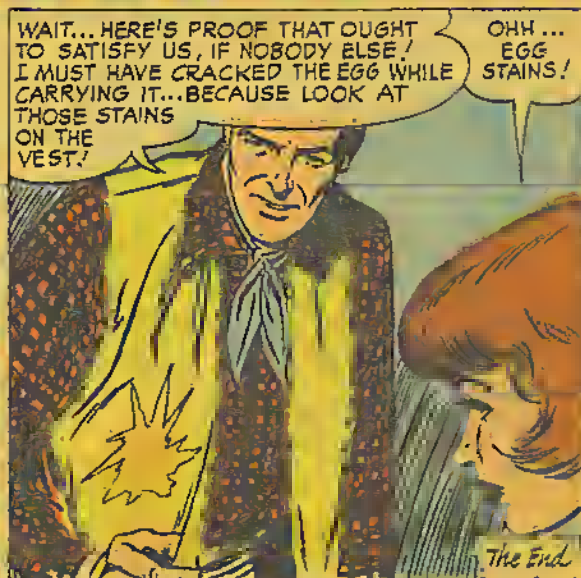
AND THE SERPENT  
HAS BECOME PETRIFIED  
AGAIN, TOO! OH, ROY,  
DID THE WHOLE THING  
ACTUALLY HAPPEN...  
OR WAS IT ALL A  
DREAM OF SOME  
KIND?

I... I DON'T KNOW,  
ELLEN! WITHOUT THE  
EGG WE HAVE NO  
PROOF OF ANYTHING!  
AND CERTAINLY NO  
ONE ELSE WOULD BE-  
LIEVE THAT THIS WAS  
ONCE AN EGG...



WAIT... HERE'S PROOF THAT OUGHT  
TO SATISFY US, IF NOBODY ELSE!  
I MUST HAVE CRACKED THE EGG WHILE  
CARRYING IT... BECAUSE LOOK AT  
THOSE STAINS  
ON THE  
VEST!

OHH...  
EGG  
STAINS!



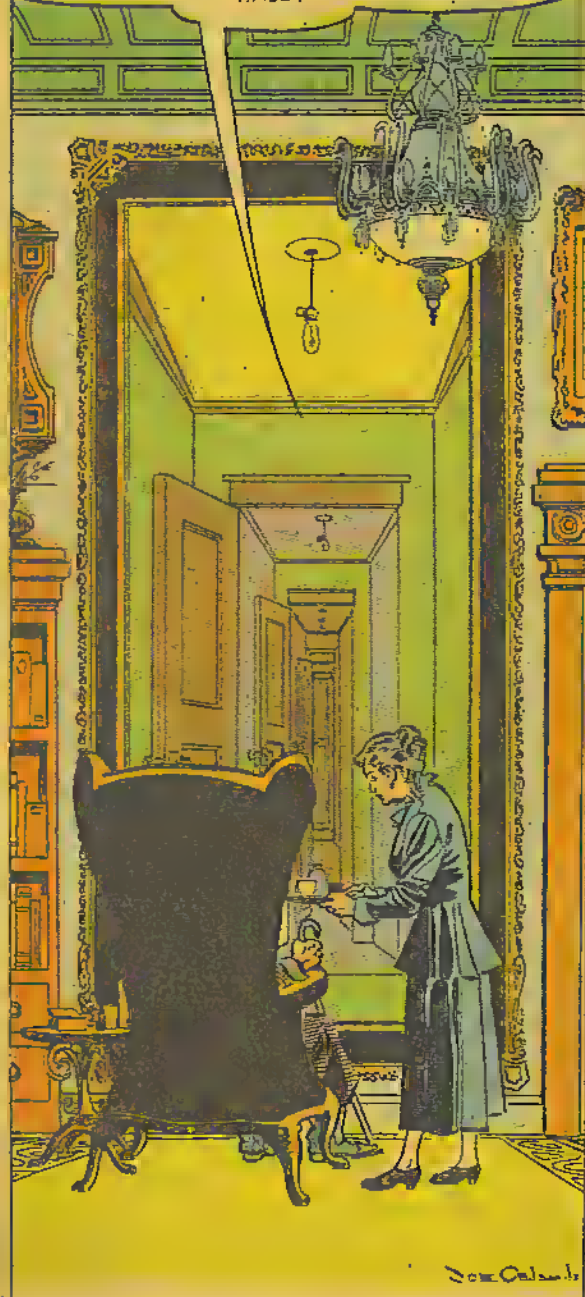
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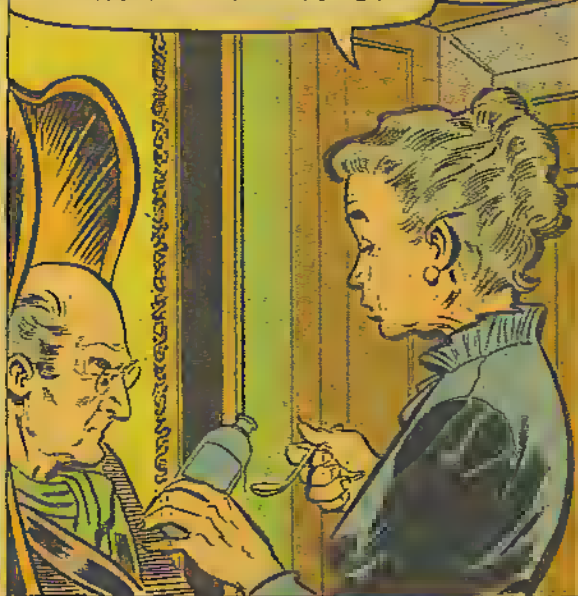
JONATHAN TOWNSEND, AN OLD AND INFIRM CONNOISSEUR AND COLLECTOR OF ART ANTIQUES, SAT IN THE LIBRARY OF HIS GLOOMY BOSTON TOWN HOUSE, STIFF AND MOTIONLESS IN HIS FAVORITE, HIGHBACKED WING CHAIR, JONATHAN'S UNBLINKING, CLEAR BLUE EYES REMAINED FOCUSED ON THE HUGE PAINTING ON THE WALL. HIS FAITHFUL HOUSEKEEPER, MRS. PURDY, WANTED JONATHAN TO REMOVE THE PAINTING, BUT HE WOULD NOT. FOR ONLY JONATHAN KNEW HOW EXTRAORDINARY A PAINTING IT WAS... KNEW THE STRANGE, TERRIBLE SECRET THAT LAY HIDDEN BEHIND...

# The HIDDEN DOORS

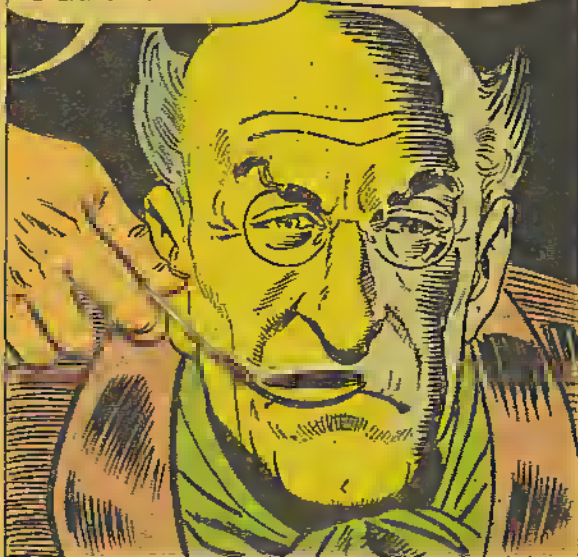
MR. TOWNSEND... IF ONLY YOU WOULD LET ME GET RID OF THIS TERRIBLE PAINTING AND PUT THAT LOVELY RENAISSANCE YOU LOVE SO MUCH BACK IN THE WALL.



YOU USED TO HATE THIS PAINTING SO MUCH, MR. TOWNSEND... WHY DO YOU INSIST ON LETTING IT HANG WHEN YOU HAVE SUCH BEAUTIFUL MASTERPIECES TO PUT IN ITS PLACE?



MISS TOWNSEND HAS BEEN MISSING FOR TWO MONTHS NOW... SHE'LL NEVER COME BACK... YOU CAN ENJOY YOUR OTHER PAINTINGS NOW INSTEAD OF STARING AT THIS MONSTROSITY FOR SO MANY HOURS EVERY DAY.





WHAT WAS IT ABOUT THIS PAINTING THAT SO TRANSFIXED JONATHAN TOWNSEND? WHY DID HE NOT REPLACE IT WITH THE GREAT MASTERPIECES THAT HE OWNED? LET US GO BACK A FEW MONTHS TO THE DAYS WHEN HIS ART TREASURES STILL HUNG ON THE SAME WALL!

I'M SICK OF IT, I TELL YOU! I CAN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER! THIS UGLY OLD HOUSE... THESE GLOOMY OLD ROOMS... THESE MISERABLE ANTIQUES... THIS MUSTY OLD FASHIONED FURNITURE! I CAN'T LIVE IN THESE SURROUNDINGS! I WANT NEW THINGS... BRIGHT MODERN, COLORFUL THINGS! I'M YOUNG... I CAN'T LIVE IN A HOUSE THAT MAKES ME FEEL HALF DEAD!



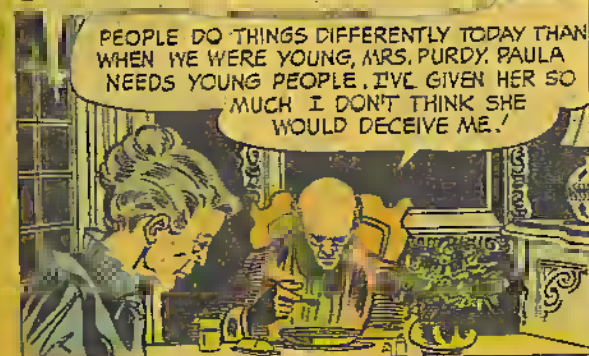
THAT WAS JONATHAN'S LIFE WITH PAULA... PAULA WHOM JONATHAN HAD PROMISED TO TAKE CARE OF WHEN HER MOTHER HAD DIED A YEAR AGO...

IF ONLY I COULD HAVE RAISED PAULA FROM A YOUNGSTER IT WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT! I COULD HAVE TAUGHT HER TO LOVE THESE THINGS THAT ARE SO DEAR TO ME NOW!



AND SO, AS OFTEN HAPPENED, JONATHAN HAD DINNER AT HOME ALONE, WITH ONLY MRS. PURDY TO SERVE HIM AND KEEP HIM COMPANY. MRS. PURDY DID NOT APPROVE OF PAULA'S COMPANY...

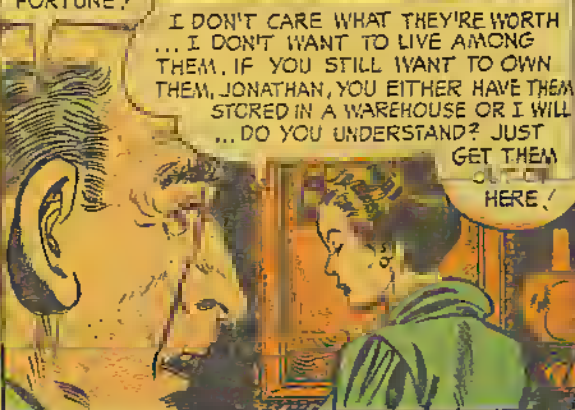
YOU'RE TOO GOOD TO HER... TOO UNDERSTANDING! ESPECIALLY AFTER THE WAY SHE CARRIES ON ABOUT THIS HOUSE. SHE SHOULD CONFIDE IN YOU! I DON'T TRUST THAT HENRY MASON!



PEOPLE DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY TODAY THAN WHEN WE WERE YOUNG, MRS. PURDY. PAULA NEEDS YOUNG PEOPLE. I'VE GIVEN HER SO MUCH I DON'T THINK SHE WOULD DECEIVE ME!

YES THAT WAS PAULA... JONATHAN'S YOUNG, BEAUTIFUL, TEMPESTUOUS NIECE... WITH A HEART LIKE A DAGGER OF ICE!

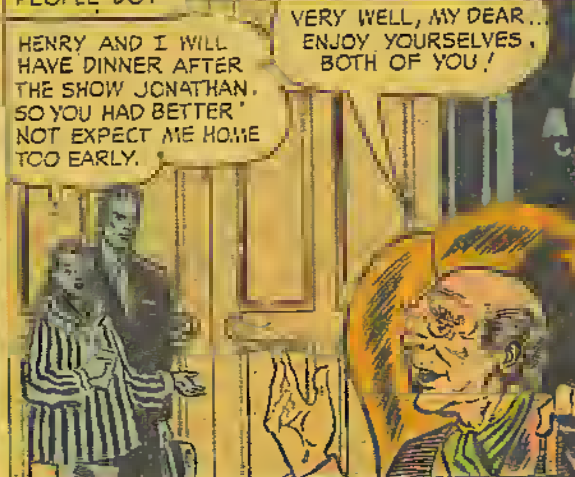
BUT PAULA, MY DEAR... YOU DON'T REALIZE THE VALUE OF THESE THINGS! WHY, THESE PAINTINGS ALONE ARE WORTH AN ABSOLUTE FORTUNE!



I DON'T CARE WHAT THEY'RE WORTH... I DON'T WANT TO LIVE AMONG THEM. IF YOU STILL WANT TO OWN THEM, JONATHAN, YOU EITHER HAVE THEM STORED IN A WAREHOUSE OR I WILL... DO YOU UNDERSTAND? JUST

GET THEM OUT OF HERE!

AND WHEN PAULA WAS NOT AT HOME? WHY, SHE WAS OUT WITH HENRY MASON... DINING, DANCING, ATTENDING THEATRE... DOING THE THINGS YOUNG PEOPLE DO.



HENRY AND I WILL HAVE DINNER AFTER THE SHOW JONATHAN. SO YOU HAD BETTER NOT EXPECT ME HOME TOO EARLY.

VERY WELL, MY DEAR... ENJOY YOURSELVES, BOTH OF YOU!

BUT THE INTUITION THAT MRS. PURDY FELT ABOUT PAULA AND HENRY MASON WOULD HAVE BEEN PROVEN SO TRUE HAD SHE OR JONATHAN BEEN ABLE TO OVERHEAR THEIR CONVERSATION...

HOW CAN YOU CONTINUE TO LIVE IN THAT HOUSE, PAULA? LEAVE HIM... MARRY ME... YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU!

NO, HENRY... I CAN'T LEAVE HIM. THINGS ARE FINE THIS WAY, AND HE DOESN'T SUSPECT OUR MOTIVES!





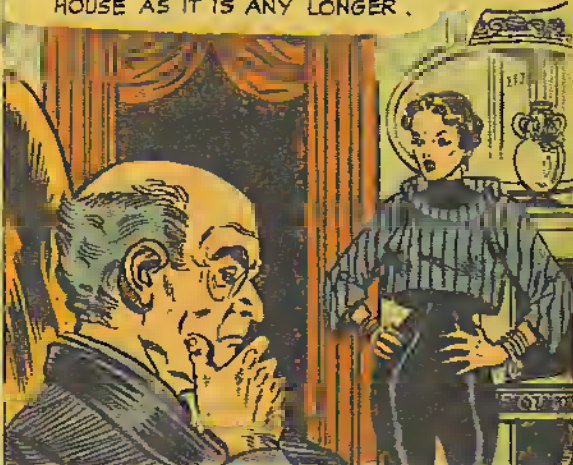
PAULA WAS DETERMINED TO BEND JONATHAN TO HER WILL WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY. AND SO...

I'VE NO PATIENCE LEFT, JONATHAN! YOU EITHER REFURNISH THIS HOUSE MY WAY OR I'LL DO IT MYSELF!

PAULA, BE REASONABLE! YOU'RE HOME SO LITTLE... AND THESE PRECIOUS THINGS ARE ALL I HAVE LEFT TO LIVE FOR. SURELY YOU WON'T DEPRIVE ME OF THAT!



ALL RIGHT, JONATHAN... I SEE YOU WON'T DO IT SO I WILL! I'VE HAD ENOUGH. IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MUCH I'M HOME OR NOT... I STILL LIVE HERE AND I WON'T PUT UP WITH THIS HOUSE AS IT IS ANY LONGER.



JONATHAN PROTESTED VIOLENTLY... BITTERLY... BUT HE COULD DO NOTHING. THE MOVING MEN CAME AND TOOK AWAY HIS PRECIOUS ANTIQUES... HIS TREASURED WORKS OF ART... HIS STURDY OLD FURNITURE. PAULA LET HIM KEEP ONLY HIS CHERISHED OLD WING BACK CHAIR. INTO THE HOUSE CAME FLIMSY MODERN FURNITURE AND BRIGHT SHINY PIECES OF GLASS, CHROME AND WROUGHT IRON. AND FILLING THE ENTIRE LIBRARY WALL WHERE JONATHAN'S VALUABLE MASTERPIECES ONCE HUNG, THERE WAS NOW A FANTASTIC MODERN PAINTING.

...WHAT'S THIS... THIS... MONSTROSITY!!!



IT'S A MODERN PAINTING... CERTAINLY MORE INTERESTING THAN THOSE DULL OLD MASTERS YOU USED TO HAVE.

IT'S FRIGHTFUL!!! A HORROR!!! A DISGRACE!! PAULA... WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? MY REPUTATION AS AN ART COLLECTOR... IT'S RUINED!! I'LL BE THE LAUGHING STOCK OF THE ART WORLD!



WELL, I LIKE IT... AND IT'S STAYING UP! THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO CHANGE, JONATHAN. YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO LIVE WITH IT AS I HAD TO LIVE WITH YOUR OLD THINGS!





SO JONATHAN HAD TO KEEP THE PAINTING... AND AS EACH DAY WENT BY HE SAT AND LOOKED AT IT AND GOT TO LOATHE IT MORE AND MORE.

MEDICINE WON'T DO ME ANY GOOD ANY MORE, MRS. PURDY. WHAT HAVE I TO LIVE FOR... MY BEAUTIFUL POSSESSIONS GONE... AND THIS WRETCHED THING THEY CALL MODERN ART HANGING HERE ALL THE TIME!

I FEEL SO BADLY FOR YOU, MR. TOWNSEND! IT IS A GHASTLY PAINTING. OH, I WISH I COULD DO SOMETHING FOR YOU



DAYS PASSED INTO WEEKS, AND WEEKS INTO MONTHS. THE PAINTING STAYED ON THE WALL, AND JONATHAN'S WILL TO LIVE DWINDLED. THEN ONE DAY WHEN BOTH PAULA AND MRS. PURDY WERE OUT, HE WAS ASLEEP IN HIS WING CHAIR. WHEN HE AWOKE IT WAS DUSK. A SINGLE LAMP LIGHTED THE PAINTING. IT WAS THEN THAT JONATHAN MADE THE AMAZING DISCOVERY...

WHA...WHAT'S THIS? WHAT A STRANGE REFLECTION THE THE LAMP THROWS ON THE PAINTING. IT GIVES IT SUCH A STRANGE LOOK... ALMOST THIRD DIMENSIONAL!



WH... WHY... THIS IS FANTASTIC... UTTERLY UNBELIEVABLE !!! IT IS THREE DIMENSIONAL !!! I CAN ACTUALLY WALK RIGHT INTO THIS ROOM AS IF IT REALLY EXISTED !!



BACK THERE... BEYOND THE FRAME... MY LIBRARY. WHAT AN INCREDIBLE THING THIS IS ...!



JONATHAN PASSED THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR AT THE END OF THE ROOM... AND FOUND HIMSELF IN THE SECOND ROOM... COMPLETELY EMPTY AS THE FIRST ONE HAD BEEN. HE WENT THROUGH THE THIRD DOOR. THE THIRD ROOM WAS EXACTLY LIKE THE FIRST TWO. JONATHAN WENT THROUGH MORE ROOMS AND MORE DOORS... ALL ALIKE...

THIS WILL BE A SECRET. MY SECRET ALONE. NOBODY WILL EVER KNOW... NOT EVEN PAULA!



JONATHAN TOLD NOBODY. EXCEPT WHEN HE WAS ALONE, HE NEVER ALLOWED THE SAME LIGHTING TO FALL ON THE PAINTING AS WHEN HE HAD DISCOVERED ITS STRANGE THIRD-DIMENSIONAL QUALITY. TIME WENT BY... AND THEN, ONE EVENING JONATHAN... AGAIN IN HIS WING CHAIR. HE AWOKE LATE AT NIGHT AND HEARD VOICES IN THE LIBRARY...

I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY ROOMS THERE ARE... BESIDES I COULD GET LOST IN HERE. I BETTER GO BACK.

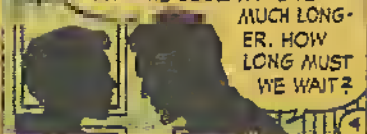


JONATHAN'S ASLEEP UPSTAIRS, HENRY. STAY WITH ME HERE AWHILE...

DON'T GO HOW LONG CAN THIS YET! GO ON, PAULA? YOU

SAID HE WAS FAILING... THAT HE COULDN'T LIVE

MUCH LONGER. HOW LONG MUST WE WAIT?





I DON'T KNOW SWEETHEART. I THOUGHT WHEN I GOT RID OF HIS ANTIQUES AND THINGS HE'D BE SO CRUSHED HE'D GO QUICKLY. BUT HE'S MANAGING TO HANG ON!

PAULA DARLING...LEAVE HIM NOW. DON'T WAIT UNTIL HE DIES... WE NEED EACH OTHER!



NO, HENRY... I'M STAYING WITH HIM UNTIL HE DIES. I WANT HIS MONEY...



SO-OO...THE TREACHEROUS, DECEITFUL, LITTLE MINX. AH... PAULA... YOU HAVE JUST CREATED YOUR OWN RUIN. I WILL HAVE MY REVENGE, AND YOUR PAINTING SHALL BE THE INSTRUMENT OF YOUR OWN DESTRUCTION



YES JONATHAN KNEW EXACTLY WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO. HE KNEW NOW WHAT KIND OF NIECE HE HAD... AND FOR THE FIRST TIME HE EVEN WAS HAPPY ABOUT THE PAINTING THAT SHE HUNG IN HIS LIBRARY. JONATHAN COULD HARDLY WAIT UNTIL HENRY MASON CAME AROUND TO TAKE PAULA OUT AGAIN...

GOOD NIGHT, JONATHAN... I'LL SEE YOU IN THE MORNING.

HAVE A GOOD TIME, BOTH OF YOU!

HAVE A VERY GOOD TIME...IT'S GOING TO BE YOUR LAST GOOD TIME...



PAULA AND HENRY LEFT... AND JONATHAN SET THE LIGHTING IN THE LIBRARY SO THAT WHEN THEY CAME BACK THEY, TOO WOULD DISCOVER THE SECRET OF THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL PAINTING.

YOU'LL SOON FIND OUT, PAULA, WHAT AN AMAZING PAINTING YOU BOUGHT...AND YOU'LL REGRET FOR AN ETERNITY WHAT YOU DID TO ME!



THEN JONATHAN WENT INTO THE ADJOINING ROOM. HE SAT AND WAITED... WAITED FOR HOURS UNTIL VERY EARLY IN THE MORNING...UNTIL PAULA AND HENRY CAME HOME...

GOOD NIGHT, HENRY

GOOD NIGHT, DARLING!



AND THEN SUDDENLY...

HENRY... THE PAINTING... LOOK... HOW STRANGE IT LOOKS...

YES.. I CAN SEE IT FROM HERE...IT LOOKS LIKE IT HAS A THIRD DIMENSION, LET'S SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT...





PAULA... THIS CAN'T BE REAL... IT'S UNBELIEVABLE! LOOK... WE CAN WALK RIGHT INTO THE PAINTING... STEP INTO THE ROOM - ITSELF...!



I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, HENRY. I SAW NOTHING DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS PAINTING WHEN I BOUGHT IT, HENRY... IT... IT'S FRIGHTENING...!

PAULA AND HENRY WENT THROUGH THE FIRST ROOM... THROUGH THE FIRST INNER DOOR... INTO THE SECOND ROOM... THROUGH THE SECOND INNER DOOR... INTO THE THIRD ROOM... THROUGH THE THIRD INNER DOOR.



NONSENSE, PAULA... I'VE NEVER KNOWN YOU TO BE AFRAID OF ANYTHING. I WONDER HOW MANY OF THESE ROOMS THERE ARE... AND WHERE THEY GO...

HENRY AND PAULA WENT THROUGH THE FOURTH INNER DOOR. THEY CONTINUED UNTIL THEY HAD PASSED THROUGH FIFTEEN DOORS! THEN...



I MEAN IT, HENRY... I'M FRIGHTENED... I FEEL SOMETHING IS GOING TO HAPPEN! LET'S GO BACK!

THEY TURNED TO GO BACK AND...

HOW DO WE GET OUT! LOOK AT ALL THE DOORS!



LIKE TWO WILD ANIMALS, PAULA AND HENRY STARTED RACING THROUGH THE OPEN DOORWAYS BUT COULDN'T FIND THEIR WAY OUT!



WE'RE LOST IN HERE! WE'LL NEVER GET OUT!

BACK IN HIS LIBRARY JONATHAN SAT DOWN IN THE HIGH-BACKED WING CHAIR AND WATCHED THE STRANGE PAINTING OF THE INNER DOORS... LISTENED TO THE STEPS OF PAULA AND HENRY AS THEY WANDERED THROUGH THE ROOMS TRYING TO FIND THEIR WAY OUT!



JONATHAN GOT RID OF ALL HIS NIECE'S MODERN FURNISHINGS. HE BROUGHT BACK HIS PRECIOUS ANTIQUES... HIS PRICELESS WORKS OF ART... HIS STURDY OLD FURNITURE... EVERYTHING WENT BACK TO ITS OLD PLACE, EXCEPT THE MASTERPIECES, WHICH HE HUNG ON ANOTHER WALL. THE ONLY THING OF PAULA'S THAT JONATHAN KEPT WAS THE STRANGE PAINTING OF THE INNER DOORS. NOBODY CAN UNDERSTAND WHY HE KEEPS IT... FOR NOBODY KNOWS ABOUT THE COUPLE WANDERING AIMLESSLY THROUGH IT EXCEPT JONATHAN HIMSELF!

The End



# The MASQUERADE!

A MASQUERADE BALL... FAMILIAR FACES  
DISGUISED BY MASKS... ALL IN INNOCENT  
MERRIMENT. BUT IS IT ALL INNOCENT...  
ALL IN FUN? HOW CAN YOU BE SURE  
THAT A LIFELIKE MASK IS ACTUALLY A  
MASK AND NOT THE REAL THING? TAKE  
THE CASE OF ANNE FULTON, WHO WILL  
NEVER BE SURE WHO HER PARTNER IN  
THE MASQUERADE BALL  
REALLY WAS ...



IT ALL STARTED INNOCENTLY ENOUGH...

I'M GLAD YOU TOLD  
ME YOU'RE GOING TO  
BE DRESSED AS A  
SHEPHERDESS AT  
THE MASQUERADE,  
ANNE. NOW I'LL BE  
ABLE TO FIND YOU!

BUT YOU'VE GOT TO TELL  
ME HOW **YOU'LL** BE  
DRESSED! AS YOUR FIANCEE,  
I WANT TO KEEP AN EYE ON  
YOU TO SEE THAT YOU  
DON'T DANCE WITH TOO  
MANY OTHER GIRLS! SO  
COME ON, WALT--'FESS UP!



OKAY! I'M COMING DRESSED AS THE MOST  
AUTHENTIC-LOOKING DEVIL ANYONE EVER SAW!  
I'VE GOT THE RUBBER FACE MASK AND COSTUME  
THAT WAS USED AT MY FRATERNITY INITIATIONS  
--AND IT'S SO REAL THAT THE DEVIL HIMSELF  
WOULD THINK I'M  
HIS TWIN BROTHER.





THE NIGHT OF THE DANCE...

HANG IT! I'M  
ALREADY LATE FOR THE  
MASQUERADE, AND NOW  
THIS ZIPPER WILL  
MAKE ME EVEN  
LATER!



A LITTLE LATER...

THERE'S WALT! HE  
WAS RIGHT... HIS  
COSTUME IS  
WONDERFUL!



WELL, HI THERE,  
MR. DEVIL...



OH...!

IS MY COSTUME TOO REALISTIC  
FOR YOU? DON'T LET IT FRIGHTEN  
YOU!



OF COURSE I WASN'T FRIGHTENED,  
DARLING... JUST A LITTLE SURPRISED  
AT HOW GOOD YOUR  
COSTUME IS. YOU'LL  
PROBABLY WIN THE  
AWARD FOR THE BEST  
COSTUME OF THE BALL!

THE DEVIL AND THE  
SHEPHERDESS WILL  
DANCE!

MAYBE I  
WILL, BUT  
RIGHT NOW

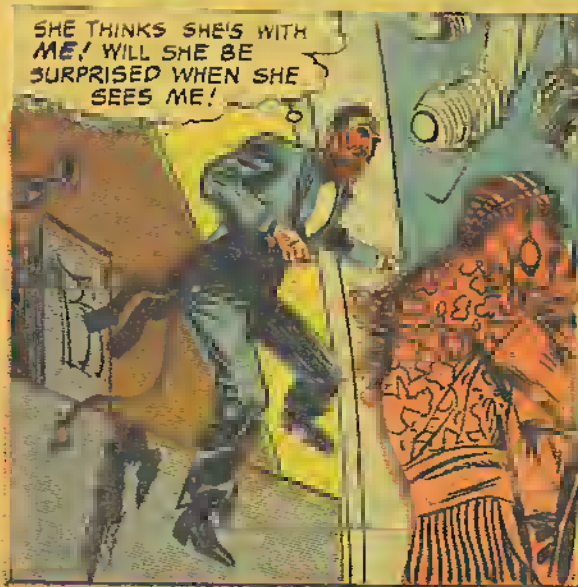


AND DON'T THINK YOU'LL  
BE ABLE TO SCARE ME  
AGAIN, WALT... SO  
YOU CAN STOP  
SPEAKING IN  
THAT DEEP VOICE!

TONIGHT, NOT ONLY  
WILL I **LOOK** LIKE THE  
DEVIL... I'M GOING TO  
**SOUND** LIKE HIM, TOO!











IN A FAR CORNER OF THE GROUNDS...





YOU'RE SPOILING THE ILLUSION--  
I'M SUPPOSED TO BE THE  
DEVIL AND YOU KEEP  
CALLING ME WALT!



I'M SORRY! I PROMISE TO  
THINK OF YOU AS THE  
DEVIL FROM NOW ON.

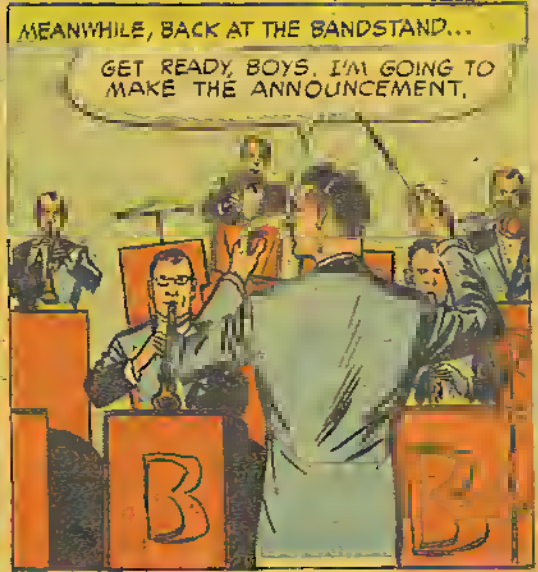


... CAN'T FIND HER IN THIS  
JIG-SAW PUZZLE. MAYBE ANNE  
WENT BACK INSIDE...



MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE BANDSTAND...

GET READY, BOYS. I'M GOING TO  
MAKE THE ANNOUNCEMENT.



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE, IT  
ISN'T MIDNIGHT YET, BUT THE CYMBAL PLAYER IS  
GOING TO STRIKE TWELVE GONGS--AND  
WHEN HE DOES, THIS IS WHAT I'M GOING  
TO ASK YOU TO DO...





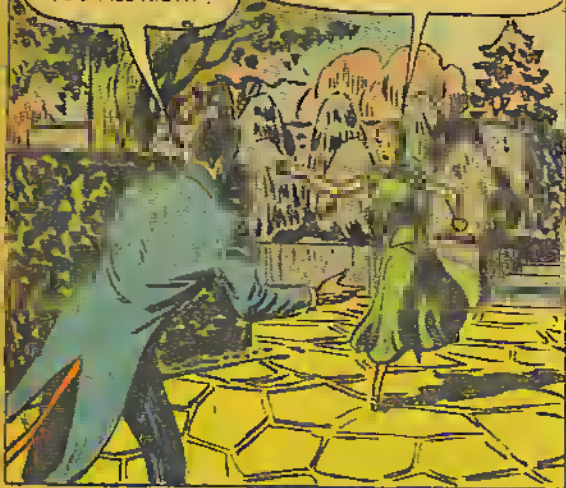




WALT, LED TO ANNE BY HER CALLS, RACES DOWN THE RIGHT PATH...

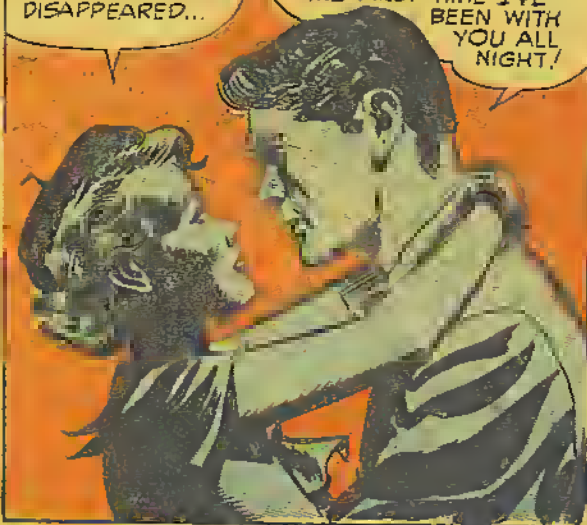
ANNE... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

OH, WALT-- THANK HEAVENS WHERE DID YOU GO?



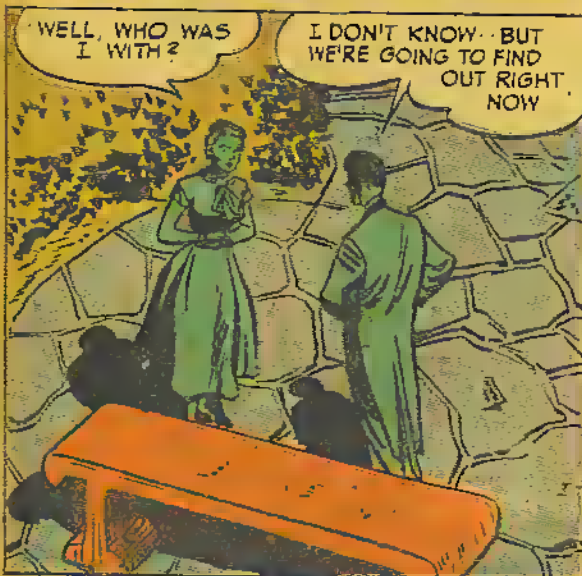
YOU FRIGHTENED ME WHEN YOU DISAPPEARED...

DISAPPEARED? THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN WITH YOU ALL NIGHT!



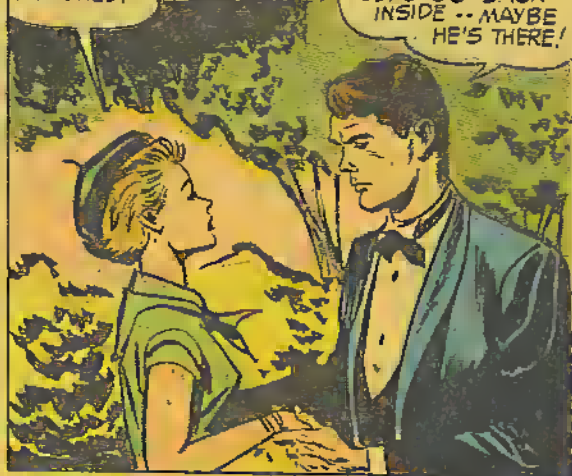
WELL, WHO WAS I WITH?

I DON'T KNOW-- BUT WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT RIGHT NOW



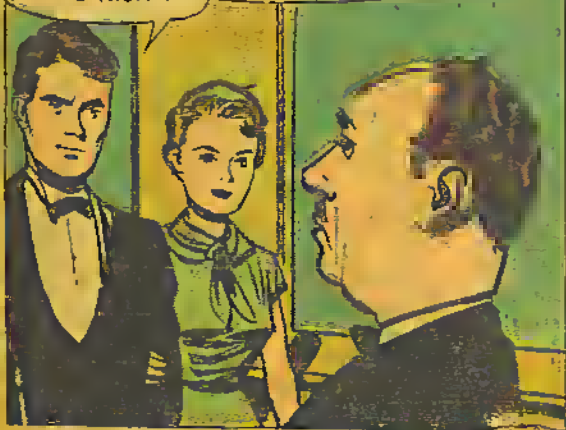
THIS IS THE SPOT WHERE WE WERE AT-- BUT WHOEVER OR WHATEVER HE WAS, HE'S VANISHED!

WELL, WHOEVER HE WAS, HE'S NOT HERE NOW! LET'S GO BACK INSIDE -- MAYBE HE'S THERE!



ANNE AND WALT DECIDED TO TALK TO THE TICKET COLLECTOR AT THE BALL ROOM ENTRANCE...

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHER MASQUERADER WHO WAS DRESSED LIKE A DEVIL. HE DANCED WITH THIS 'YOUNG LADY' ALL NIGHT.



YOU MUST BE MISTAKEN-- THE YOUNG LADY SAT IN A CORNER ALL NIGHT UNTIL JUST A FEW MINUTES BEFORE MIDNIGHT. THEN SHE WENT OUTSIDE BY HERSELF. THERE WAS NO OTHER MASQUERADING DEVIL HERE UNTIL YOU CAME IN JUST BEFORE WE RANG IN THE NEW YEAR.



THE END